



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Department of Planning and Development

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Public Hearing Date: July 10, 2007
Land Use Action Date: **T.B.D.**
Board of Aldermen Action Date: September 17, 2007
90-Day Expiration Date: October 8, 2007

TO: Board of Aldermen

FROM: Michael Kruse, Director of Planning and Development
David Koses, Transportation Planning Coordinator *DK*

DATE: September 6, 2007

SUBJECT: **Petition #211-07** of 109 OAK STREET CONDOMINIUM TRUST,
Supplemental Parking Information

CC: Mayor David B. Cohen

In our July 6, 2007 memo (*SEE ATTACHED*), the Planning Department noted that, based on parking information provided by the petitioner as of that date, during the mid-day period, there were anywhere from 59 to 102 vehicles parked in the 109 Oak Street parking lot. This usage was based on the current level of occupancy at that time, with the Gymboree and the Curve spaces occupied, but with the balance of the basement area vacant.

However, the parking information submitted at that time focused strictly on mid-day observations and did not include information on the number of parking spaces that were occupied before 10:00 a.m. or after 3:00 p.m., and did not include any count of the metered public parking available near the site, across from 1244 Chestnut Street.

The Planning Department was concerned that the data collected by the petitioner and included in the Planning Department's July 6, 2007 memo may not have represented peak parking demand. To address this concern, the Planning Department requested that additional parking counts be conducted on September 5 and 6, at 9:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 4:30 p.m., to provide a more complete examination of the potential parking demand in the 109 Oak Street parking lot.¹ The Planning Department also asked the petitioner to specify where vehicles may park at those times that the demand for parking spaces is greater than the number of spaces available in the on-site parking lot.

¹ In the spring of 2007, Argosy Publishing Company, the largest employer in the building, reduced its workforce by about 20 employees, thereby reducing parking demand.

This supplemental parking data was collected and was summarized by Planning Horizons in a memo dated September 7, 2007 and attached to this cover memorandum. Although the Planning Department did not receive the actual counts and cannot present the maximum number of vehicles observed during these times, ***the supplemental data indicates that, based on the current uses in the building, that the highest level of parking demand currently occurs during the mid-day period.***

Based on the additional data collected, the Planning Department reiterates the statement made in the June 6, 2007 memo that, ***there may be some slight parking shortages during the mid-day once the building returns to full occupancy.*** Upon full occupancy, the Planning Department believes that the number of parking spaces available is likely to be nearly identical to the peak parking demand. If all of the employees and clients were to drive to the building, the Planning Department and Assistant Traffic Engineer calculate a peak demand of up to 103 spaces, as shown in the chart below.

Tenant	Parking Demand
Argosy (employees)	57
Alexandra Construction (employees)	6
PR Management (employees)	6
Curves (employees & clients at peak times)	8
Gymboree (employees & clients at peak times)	16
CEC (employees & clients at peak times)	10
Total	103
Total Proposed Parking Spaces	103

The Planning Department has received qualitative information from the petitioner, and believes that some of the existing employees carpool, get dropped off, take public transportation, walk, or do not work every day of the week, thereby opening up a few extra spaces every day.

However, the Planning Department believes that during some days, parking demand is likely to exceed the number of spaces available. Sweet Street, although a private way, is the only roadway that leads into and out of the site and is too narrow to allow for long term on-street parking. ***The petitioner has provided information that indicates that during mid-day periods (when the 109 Oak Street lot is most likely to be full), an average of 8 additional spaces are likely to be available near the site at the metered parking spaces on Chestnut Street, which should be adequate to meet the potential excess demand.***

MEMORANDUM

To: Land Use Committee of the City of Newton Board of Aldermen

From: Lou Mercuri, Planning Horizons

Re: 109 Oak Street Special Permit

Date: September 5, 2007

On behalf of the petitioner for this land use special permit petition, I am submitting this **supplemental report** regarding the requested parking waiver at 109 Oak Street in Newton Lower Falls.

At the request of the Department of Planning and Development, Planning Horizons conducted 14 additional parking counts at the 109 Oak Street lot in July and early September. These counts were conducted on various weekdays at 9:00 am, 12:30 pm, and 4:30 pm at the request of the Department. Five counts were obtained at 9:00 am and 12:30 pm, and 4 counts were obtained at 4:30 pm for a total of 14 counts.

A second series of 12 counts were also conducted on most of the same dates and times in the city metered parking area opposite 1244 Chestnut Street (Riverside Community Care) which is approximately 250 feet from the 109 Oak Street site. These counts were obtained as a contingency plan in the unusual event that the 109 Oak Street lot would become full and some long-term overflow parking in the area would be needed. There are 16 twelve-hour meters at this location, and employees of the Children's Evaluation Center (or other tenants in the building) could readily access this parking area in the rare case of a parking shortage in the 109 Oak Street lot.

A chart and graphs summarizing the supplemental data are presented on the following pages. The following average (mean) parking occupancy rates were obtained at each of the three time intervals for both locations.

109 Oak Street Lot

	Average Spaces Filled	Average Spaces Empty
9:00 am	37	98
12:30 pm	54	81
4:30 pm	48	87

Metered 12-hour spaces opposite 1244 Chestnut Street

	Average Spaces Filled	Average Spaces Empty
9:00 am	4	12
12:30 pm	8	8
4:30 pm	5	11

The proposed plan reduces the actual number of parking spaces from 135 to 103 at completion of the 109 Oak Street lot improvements. **Using the recent counts and comparing the 103-space lot at completion, at 9:00 am an average of 66 spaces would be available, at 12:30 pm 49 spaces would be available, and at 4:30 pm 55 spaces would be available. As stated in the original Planning Horizons report of May 30, 2007 and reaffirmed by these supplemental counts, it is expected that a significant parking surplus will exist upon completion of the project.**

The nearby long-term metered spaces show an average usage of 6 spaces throughout the day, leaving an average of 10 additional available spaces in the event long-term parking is needed for tenants of the building.

It needs to be noted that our original May 30, 2007 report mainly reflected counts in July and September 2006, where the actual counts in the 109 Oak Street lot were higher than in this supplemental report. A change in demand for employee parking occurred in the spring of 2007 when Argosy Publishing Company, the largest employer in the building, reduced its workforce by about 20 employees. The net effect has been a reduction by at least 20 cars from the original 2006 surveys.

I trust you will find this supplemental information and the original May 30, 2007 report useful in your consideration of this petition and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have about this aspect of the proposal.